

**CLAIM AMENDMENTS**

Amended claims: 1, 3-6 and canceled claims 7-14. Added new claims: 15-28.

1. (Currently Amended) A shaped ~~Shaped~~ catalyst carrier containing crystalline titania, wherein at least 50 wt% of the crystalline titania is present as brookite and wherein the carrier comprises between 40 and 100 wt% of crystalline titania based on the total weight of the carrier, ~~preferably between 70 and 100 wt%~~, the shaped catalyst carrier not being a coated catalyst carrier.

2. (Original) The carrier of claim 1, wherein at least 60 wt% of the crystalline titania is present as brookite.

3. (Currently Amended) The carrier of claim 1, ~~claims 1-2~~, wherein at most 90 wt% of the crystalline titania is present as brookite, ~~preferably at most 80 wt%~~.

4. (Currently Amended) The carrier of claim 1, ~~any of claims 1-3~~, wherein the crystalline titania is present as rutile in the range of from 0 to 50 wt%, ~~preferably in the range of from 5 to 30 wt%~~ and wherein the crystalline titania is present as anatase in the range of from 0 to 10 wt%, ~~preferably in the range of from 0 to 5 wt%~~.

5. (Currently Amended) The carrier of claim 1, ~~any of claims 1-4~~, wherein the primary particle size of the brookite is in the range of from 10 to 100 nm, ~~preferably of from 20 to 70 nm~~.

6. (Currently Amended) The carrier of claim 1, ~~anyone of claims 1-5~~, wherein also further comprising a binder is present, ~~preferably silica, alumina or a combination of the two of them~~, and wherein the binder forms ~~in the range of from 0 to 20 wt% of the carrier, preferably in the range of from 0 to 10 wt%~~.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Canceled)

9. (Canceled)
10. (Canceled)
11. (Canceled)
12. (Canceled)
13. (Canceled)
14. (Canceled)
15. (New) A catalyst or catalyst precursor, comprising a Group VIII metal or a Group VIII metal compound and a shaped carrier containing crystalline titania, wherein at least 50 wt% of the crystalline titania is present as brookite and wherein the carrier comprises between 40 and 100 wt% of crystalline titania based on the total weight of the carrier, the shaped catalyst carrier not being a coated catalyst carrier.
16. (New) The catalyst or catalyst precursor of claim 15, wherein the Group VIII metal or Group VIII metal compound is selected from the group consisting of Ru, Fe, Co and Ni.
17. (New) The catalyst or catalyst precursor of claim 15, wherein the Group VIII metal or Group VIII metal compound comprises Co.
18. (New) The catalyst or catalyst precursor of claim 15, further comprising one or more metals or metal compounds of Group IIa, IIIb, IVb, Vb or VIb.
19. (New) The catalyst or catalyst precursor of claim 18, wherein the metal or metal compound of Group IIa, IIIb, IVb, Vb or VIb comprises manganese or zirconium oxide.
20. (New) The catalyst or catalyst precursor of claim 15, further comprising one or more additional metals of Group VIIb or VIII.
21. (New) The catalyst or catalyst precursor of claim 20, wherein the additional metal of Group VIIb or VIII is selected from the group consisting of rhenium, platinum and palladium.

22. (New) The catalyst or catalyst precursor of claim 15, wherein the carrier is formed by a process selected from the group consisting of spray-drying, pressing and extruding.

23. (New) The catalyst or catalyst precursor of claim 15, wherein one or more metal salts is added to the carrier by impregnation or deposition precipitation, followed by drying and calcination.

24. (New) A process for the preparation of a catalyst or a catalyst precursor comprising:

mixing crystalline titania in which at least 50 wt% of the crystalline titania is present as brookite, a liquid, and a Group VIII containing compound, which is at least partially insoluble in the amount of liquid used, to form a mixture;

shaping and drying the mixture; and

calcining the mixture.

25. (New) The process for the preparation of a catalyst or a catalyst precursor of claim 24, wherein the Group VIII compound is selected from the group consisting of metallic cobalt containing compounds, cobalt hydroxide containing compounds and cobalt oxide.

26. (New) An activated catalyst, comprising a Group VIII metal or a Group VIII metal compound and a shaped carrier containing crystalline titania, wherein at least 50 wt% of the crystalline titania is present as brookite and wherein the carrier comprises between 40 and 100 wt% of crystalline titania based on the total weight of the carrier, the shaped catalyst carrier not being a coated catalyst carrier and wherein the catalyst has been reduced with hydrogen at an elevated temperature.

27. (New) A process for the preparation of hydrocarbons comprising contacting a mixture of carbon monoxide and hydrogen with an activated catalyst, comprising a Group VIII metal or a Group VIII metal compound and a shaped carrier containing crystalline titania, wherein at least 50 wt% of the crystalline titania is present as brookite and wherein the carrier comprises between 40 and 100 wt% of crystalline

titania based on the total weight of the carrier, the shaped catalyst carrier not being a coated catalyst carrier and wherein the catalyst has been reduced with hydrogen at an elevated temperature.

28. (New) The process of claim 27, further comprising hydroisomerisation/hydrocracking of the hydrocarbon to produce a middle distillate product.